

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 3 APRIL 2019 AT 10:00

Present

Councillor CA Green – Chairperson

JPD Blundell
RL Penhale-
Thomas

N Clarke
RMI Shaw

J Gebbie
JC Spanswick

M Jones
CA Webster

Apologies for Absence

T Giffard and T Thomas

Officers:

Rachel Keepins - Scrutiny Officer

Invitees:

Cllr Richard Young - Cabinet Member Communities.
Mark Shephard - Interim Chief Executive
Martin Morgans - Head of Performance and Partnership Services
Supt Claire Evans - South Wales Police
Inspector Cheryl Griffiths - South Wales Police
Judith Jones - Partnership Co-ordinator.

110. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

M Shepherd – Interim Chief Executive, Cllr T Thomas, Cllr T Giffard.

111. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Jon-Paul Blundell declared a personal interest in that he is a member of the Public Service Board (PSB) Assets Sub-Group.
Cllr John Spanswick declared a personal interest as he is a member of the PSB Overview and Scrutiny Panel.
Cllr Carolyn Webster declared a personal interest in that she is a Board member for the YMCA.
Cllr Rod Shaw declared a personal interest in that he is a member of the PSB Overview and Scrutiny Panel as well as a member of the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.
Cllr Martyn Jones declared a personal interest in that he is Director of a company that has provided professional consultancy services to the Community Safety Partnership.

112. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 dated 17 September 2018 be approved as a true and accurate record.

113. SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES IN BRIDGEND TO BE SAFE AND COHESIVE

The Head of Performance and Partnership Services presented the report to the Committee the purpose of which was to receive an overview of the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership Priorities and Projects to review progress to date.

The Committee were advised that Bridgend Public Services Board (PSB) was established on 1 April 2016, following the introduction of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. At their meeting on 27 March 2017, the PSB took the opportunity to review the governance arrangements and priorities of the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The PSB decided to embed the activities of the Bridgend CSP into its own assessment and planning activities and by making it a sub board of the PSB. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and subsequent legislation outlines clear responsibilities for community safety.

The Head of Performance and Partnership advised that a Strategy Group had been established which includes representatives from the 6 responsible authorities including:

- Police
- Police and Crime Commissioner
- Local Authority
- Fire and Rescue Service
- Health
- Probation

The Head of Performance and Partnership described the various responsibilities of the Strategy Group, the work it had undertaken including additional key areas of work as well as responding to community safety issues as they have arisen.

On the subject of funding the Committee were advised that funding was now centralised to make best use of the resources available to them. In this way, the Authority could be confident that they could look at issues holistically, reduce duplication and target where they needed. Key to this however was the reporting of crime, and this was the rationale provided for why Bridgend Town Centre and Maesteg had been focus areas for some of the CSP's work. The Committee were advised that the work was based on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) reports in the two areas and whilst appreciating Members' concerns over smaller, isolated communities, there simply wasn't the evidence to point in that direction. The Head of Performance and Partnerships stressed the importance of all crime being reported in order that Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board can then target and focus work appropriately.

The Committee expressed concerns over the Authority's continuous reduction to Youth Service provision citing it as necessary service to provide diversion for young people. The reliance now appeared to be on grant funding and the Third Sector. Members were advised that the Youth Offending Service would be returning to Bridgend to sit under the Community Safety Partnership who will provide suitable governance. In addition to this, the South Wales Police representatives explained that there was an increasing focus on restorative justice with all officers trained to provide community resolution. This involved the offender acknowledging what they had done and with the agreement of the victim, sometimes apologising or arranging to fix any damage caused. There was also a matrix score used for youths coming into custody where, should for example, this be their first offence, they may be referred to a restorative youth panel rather than put into the justice system.

It was reported that the proposed budget reductions to CCTV provision were currently on hold as this was seen as a key tool in reducing crime and improving community safety. Alternative options were being considered for addressing the budget reduction

as well as improving CCTV provision such as updating equipment and using mobile cameras.

On the subject of neighbourhood policing the South Wales Police representatives reported that there had recently been a Neighbourhood Policing Review undertaken due to the acknowledgement that there was disparity in what neighbourhood policing was provided in different areas including that involving Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). Data and information had been gathered looking at the demand across the whole Force and resource allocation would now be evidentially based. It was reported that there was very much a focus on multi-agency working as well as community engagement and policing. It was also explained that the review has looked at a restructure of community meetings. Historically there had been issues at times with partners being able to attend which meant the meetings ended up being police centric. In addition to this PACT meetings were being examined due to the variation across the region in attendance and effectiveness. Reassurances were provided that where PACT meetings were successful, they would continue, but where they were perhaps not as effective, other initiatives would be put in place instead.

In response to queries regarding figures for those who self-harm, the South Wales Police representatives reported that unfortunately there was absolutely no way of measuring this due to the spectrum simply being too large and all agencies recorded these incidents under many different things. This had been recognised nationally. The example was given that in one year the ambulance service recorded 12,000 incidents of self-harm. Instead there was a focus on complete suicides and missed opportunities. There were also rapid response meetings and a suicide review group. It was reported that the work being carried out under the Bridgend Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Strategy was regarded as best practice and had been shared with Swansea as a result.

Concerns were raised in relation to the engagement of the Health Authority with other Partners, with the South Wales Police representatives highlighting that the subject of mental health was increasingly becoming a significant issue for the Police. It was reported that 95% of calls to 999 after 5pm were related to social mental health and not necessarily crime related. Likewise it was identified that individual Care Plans highlighted police as a main contact should something go wrong with a care plan. As a result the Police were targeting work with the Health Authority to try and get a more efficient system in place. The Committee agreed that this was not an appropriate use of police resource and more needed to be done to engage with Health and create more effective methods of dealing with such cases. The Head of Performance and Partnerships reported that there had historically been an issue with engaging Health colleagues when dealing with the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board however there had been recent positive engagement with Cwm Taf regarding the PSB and it was hoped that this would continue.

The Committee wished to acknowledge the hard work of the police, and made particular reference to the recent work of an undercover female officer who worked on the Red Dragon project.

RESOLVED: The Committee expressed continued concerns over the historical cuts to the youth service provision and the fact that as a result there is now a heavy reliance on third sector support to provide this. Members commented that this was a good example of where the Authority's Medium Term Financial Strategy is flawed in that it does not look at the long term impact sufficiently enough. In view of the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, the Committee recommend that this be used as a lesson for future consideration of the budget reductions, by Cabinet and the Scrutiny Budget Research and Evaluation Panel, where

more emphasis is placed on the long term impact and not just on the 1 or 4 year savings proposals.

The Committee noted the Head of Performance and Partnerships comments in relation to the early positive engagement with the Cwm Taf Health Board in relation to the work of the Community Safety Partnership but requested that a future update be provided to ascertain whether this engagement was ongoing and successful.

The Committee recommend that Cabinet write to Welsh Government to highlight to the Minister for Health and Social Services the issues that have previously been experienced by the Local Authority, the Police and other partner agencies in relation to engagement with the Health Authority. Going forward this needs to be a priority as meaningful, active engagement is vital in order to succeed in providing future services, particularly in relation to Mental Health.

The Committee requested that the Strategy be amended in relation to the Public Service Board Scrutiny arrangements as the Community Safety Partnership did not necessarily report to the Scrutiny Panel twice a year as a rule, due to other competing Forward Work Programme topics. With this in mind the Committee also queried whether two meetings of the PSB Scrutiny Panel were sufficient and requested that this be considered as part of the Scrutiny Forward Work Programme Workshops.

114. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Scrutiny Officer presented the Forward Work Programme report highlighting the feedback from the last meeting, the Scrutiny Workshop scheduled to take place at the next meeting and the new proposed Scrutiny items.

RESOLVED: (a) The Committee approved the feedback from their previous meetings and noted the responses

The Committee:

- i. Requested that in relation to the upcoming Scrutiny Forward Work Programme workshops discussion be held around the possibility of engaging other staff representatives of the Authority in scrutiny meetings and discussions to gain a more in depth understanding of service provision.
- ii. Agreed to allocate the subject of the 'Local Development Plan' (LDP) for their meeting on 26 June 2019, with the 'Wellbeing of Future Generations Act –Self Evaluation' as a reserve item. In relation to the LDP item, Members requested that the report focus on the process involved for developing the plan – including what regard is given for the requirements for other services such as Health and Education? What regard is given for the impact on communities, the MTFS, employment opportunities, pressures on public services and the future sustainability of all these? The Committee also requested that representatives from Health and the Police are invited to attend this meeting.

(b) In relation to the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees FWP the Committee:

- (i) Agreed the additional items on the FWP;
- (ii) Agreed that the item titled 'Review of Enforcement Vehicle' needed to be more than just an information report but possibly too small for it to be an individual item. The Committee proposed that this be considered as part of another related topic. The scrutiny officer agreed to take the comments back and see possibly where it could fit in with another item;
- (iii) Agreed the following allocation for future items to Scrutiny Committees:
 - 3 June 2019 – SOSC 1 – Communication and Engagement
 - 5 June 2019 – SOSC 2 – Post 16 ALN Review
 - 12 June 2019 – SOSC 3 – Waste

115. TIMINGS OF MEETINGS SURVEYS

RESOLVED: The Committee noted that a survey of timings of meetings of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings will be undertaken and that the outcome of the survey will be reflected in the Programme of Meetings 2019/2020 to be considered at the Annual Meeting of Council on 15 May 2019.

The Committee did however ask that the survey include flexibility for other times such as on the half hours and make allowance for any further comments or suggestions.

116. URGENT ITEMS

The meeting closed at 12:30